

The Hittites

After Hammurabi died, Mesopotamia grew weak, and other civilizations, such as the **Hittites** who lived in central Turkey, were being established. The Hittites were originally migrant peasants who lived north of the Black Sea. About 2300 B.C. they moved into **Anatolia**, which was already occupied. Anatolia is the ancient name for Asia Minor, which is Turkey today. The land was rocky, but grain could be grown and animals could be raised. The land also held many metal ores.

The Hittite Civilization began in 1750 B.C. and lasted until 1200 B.C. In many ways, the Hittite Civilization was not as organized as some other civilizations. The city-states that comprised the empire were spread throughout Asia Minor and Syria. There were many miles between the cities, and they were separated by mountains. Many city-states maintained their own languages and religions. The city-states often fought among themselves until Labarnas became king. Under his leadership, the Hittite empire grew to include most of Turkey. His son, Hattusilis I, expanded the empire into Syria. Hattusilis made the city of Hattusa the capital of the Hittite Kingdom. For protection, Hattusa was built high in the mountains and was protected by a stone wall 26 feet thick.

Hattusilis' grandson, Mursilis, rose to power, strengthened the empire, and invaded Babylon. He defeated Babylon and returned home with loot and captives he had taken from the once-powerful city. The crowds cheered and celebrated his great victory, but when he entered his palace, he was assassinated by his brother-in-law.

The Hittite Civilization did not really originate a culture of its own. It borrowed from other cultures and in some cases slightly modified what was borrowed. However, the Hittites did make two great contributions to humankind. The first was the use of iron. Before the use of iron, weapons and tools were made from copper or bronze, which are soft and bend easily. Iron is much harder.

While iron is a more common metal than copper or tin, extracting the metal for use is more complicated than it is for other metals. The process of extracting ore is called **smelting**. Exactly when and where iron was first smelted is a mystery, but it is generally agreed that real iron metallurgy began with the Hittites some time between 1900 B.C. and 1400 B.C. By 1000 B.C., the knowledge of iron metallurgy had spread throughout the Near East and the Mediterranean and westward into Europe.

The second notable accomplishment of the Hittite Empire, occurring in the 1200s B.C., was a treaty. The Hittites and the Egyptians went to war against each other. Each side scored victories but decided that fighting each other was costly and inefficient. The Egyptians and the Hittites signed a treaty pledging not to fight each other. If one was attacked by someone else, the other pledged to come to its defense. The treaty was engraved on a silver plaque. The Hittites copied the treaty on clay tablets and placed it in the library. The Egyptians etched the treaty on walls. This was the first recorded treaty by two great powers.

The Hittite laws were considered the fairest of the time. Unlike Babylonians who developed the *Code of Hammurabi* where punishment was "an eye for an eye," the Hittite law tried to compensate the person who was wronged. According to Babylonian law, if a man injured another, the man who caused the injury would be injured the same way. In the Hittite civilization, however, he would have to pay a fine to the person he injured.

HITTITE CIVILIZATION AT A GLANCE

WHERE: Anatolia, the ancient name for Asia Minor

WHEN: 1750 B.C.—1200 B.C.

ACHIEVEMENTS:

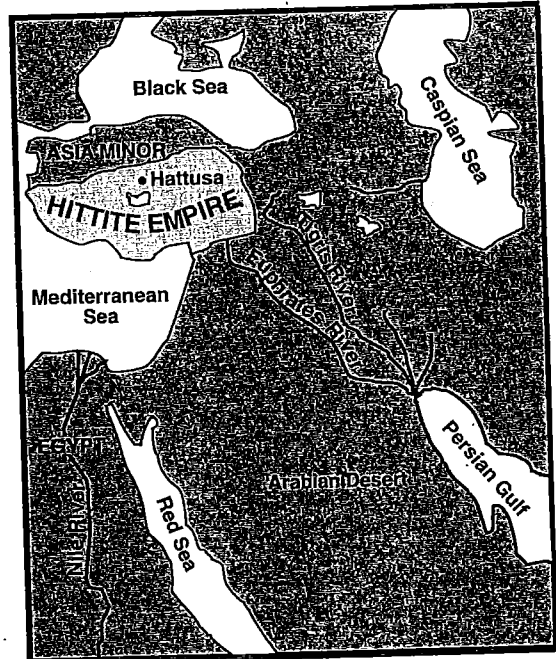
- One of the first civilizations to use iron
- Signed peace treaties
- Established a set of laws considered the fairest of the time

Name: _____

Date: _____

Hittite Civilization Quiz

Shown below are a number of sentences. Some are true and some are false. If the sentence is true, write "true" in front of the sentence. If the sentence is false, write a term that could replace the word in bold type to make the sentence true.



1. The **Hittites** lived in central Turkey.
2. **Memphis** was the capital of the Hittite Kingdom.
3. Many city-states in the Hittite Civilization maintained their own **languages** and **religions**.
4. The Hittite Civilization lasted from 1750 B.C. to **1200 B.C.**
5. The Hittite **tribes** often fought among themselves.
6. Under **Alexander's** leadership, the Hittite empire grew to include most of Turkey.
7. Labarnas' son, Hattusilis I, expanded the Hittite Empire into **Africa**.
8. The Hittite Civilization did not really originate a **culture** of its own.
9. The Hittite laws were considered the **cruelest** of the time.
10. Before the use of iron, weapons and tools were made from **copper** or **bronze**.
11. The Hittites were not as **organized** as some other civilizations.
12. The Hittite law tried to **compensate** a person who was wronged.
13. The Hittites were originally migrant peasants who lived north of the **Netherlands**.
14. Anatolia is the ancient name for **Asia Major**.
15. The process of extracting ore is called **boiling**.
16. The Hittites were among the first to use **dental floss**.
17. The Hittites and the Egyptians made the first recorded **treaty** by two great civilizations.
18. Hattusa had a stone **tower** 26 feet thick.
19. **Mursilis** was assassinated by his brother-in-law.
20. Knowledge of **steel** metallurgy began with the Hittites.

Ancient Egypt

Many great civilizations began beside rivers. There was rich soil for farming, abundant fishing and hunting, and water for drinking and irrigating crops. Between July and October each year, the Nile River, located in northeast Africa, fed by rain and melting snow from the African mountains, floods and spills over its banks. During the water's swift descent down the mountains, the turbulent streams pick up soil and carry it down to the river valley. As the Nile surges towards the Delta Region, the water overflows its banks before it empties into the Mediterranean Sea. This leaves behind a layer of silt, rich in nutrients that make it possible to grow crops in this otherwise arid land.

This is the fertile land that people began to settle in 3300 B.C. Drawn by the abundance of food provided by the Nile, people began to settle, farm, and build cities. Eventually, the area along the Nile River became the home of one of the world's earliest civilizations, the Egyptian Civilization. The Egyptians called their country the Black Land, referring to the fertile soil. The desert surrounding their country was referred to as the Red Land. The Red Land provided a natural barrier that protected Egypt from invaders. This is one of the reasons that the Egyptian civilization lasted over 3,000 years. It was the longest-lasting civilization in history, and its influence was so powerful that it is still felt today.

Egyptian influence on other ancient civilizations has been considerable. Its writing system, called **hieroglyphics**, and other cultural elements were widely adapted by other ancient cultures. In addition to writing, the Egyptians developed a paper-like material from **papyrus** reed. They also used papyrus to make mats, ropes, toys, boats, and other items.

Egyptians were excellent architects, builders, craftsmen, and artisans. They built huge pyramids in which to bury their pharaohs. One pyramid, the Great Pyramid of Giza, was so large and magnificent it was listed as one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World. It is the only one of these wonders that still stands today. The Great Pyramid of Giza was built over 5,000 years ago without modern machines or tools. Over two and one-third million stone blocks, each weighing about two and one-half tons, were transported from a stone quarry on the other side of the Nile and built into a pyramid about as high as a 42-story skyscraper. All of this was done with manpower alone. Built near the Great Pyramid of Giza was the Sphinx, a huge stone sculpture of a creature with the face of a human and the body of a lion.

The Egyptians were superb engineers as well. They built canals, dams, and a reservoir to control the flood waters of the Nile. They even built a canal from the Nile to the Red Sea in order to improve trade.

Egyptians believed in life after death; a person's soul would continue to live as long as the body was preserved. The Egyptians practiced **mummification** of the dead. When someone died, their body was prepared in such a way that it would dry out and not decay. The bodies of the wealthy were wrapped in linen. Jewels and charms were inserted in the layers of linen in order to protect the deceased. The poor were generally buried naked in shallow graves.

Archaeology, history, and drama have made Egypt a subject of interest. Countless plays, books, movies, and even operas have been based on this ancient civilization.

EGYPTIAN CIVILIZATION AT A GLANCE

WHERE: Along the Nile River in
northeast Africa

WHEN: 3100 B.C.–332 B.C.

ACHIEVEMENTS:

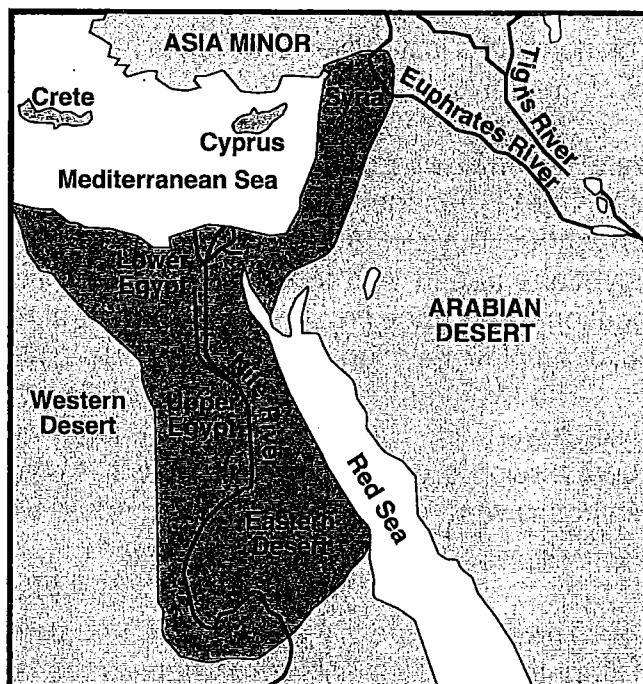
- Built the pyramids, the sphinx, canals, and temples
- Invented a calendar with 365 days
- Made a paper-like material from the papyrus plant
- Used a loom to weave cloth
- Invented a system of writing called hieroglyphics

Egypt's Three Kingdoms

The Egyptian Civilization is generally divided into three periods: the Old Kingdom, the Middle Kingdom, and the New Kingdom.

THE OLD KINGDOM

The first period of the Egyptian Civilization is called the Old Kingdom. It lasted from 3100 B.C. until 2040 B.C. Before 3400 B.C., Egypt was really two different kingdoms—Upper Egypt and Lower Egypt. These names are deceiving because if you look at a map of this ancient country, you will see that **Lower Egypt** was located at the top of the map in the northern delta where the river spreads out and empties into the Mediterranean Sea. **Upper Egypt** was located in the south, and would be found on the bottom of the map. This inconsistency is easy to understand since the Nile flows north, not south. It flows parallel to the Red Sea and eventually empties into the Mediterranean Sea.



About 3100 B.C., King Menes, a king from the south, was credited with combining the Upper and Lower Kingdoms and uniting Egypt. Menes became the first pharaoh of Egypt. **Pharaoh** was the term given to the king or ruler in Egypt. Menes was the first king of the first dynasty of Egypt. Eventually there would be thirty dynasties to rule Egypt. A **dynasty** is a series of rulers from the same family or line.

It was during the Old Kingdom that many pyramids were built. One of the most important pyramids was the Great Pyramid of Giza. It was built as a tomb for the pharaoh Khufu. He is sometimes called Cheops.

During the Old Kingdom, pharaohs were considered gods. They owned the land and everything in the country. They could do anything they wanted and make any law they wanted to. This was called the "divine rights of kings."

Menes made Memphis the capital of Egypt. Since the country was so large, he could not rule it all by himself. He needed help. He assigned people he trusted to govern different sections of Egypt. These governors, or **nomarchs**, worked to be sure that all of the commands of the pharaoh were obeyed.

The Egyptian Kingdom was very large. Since the pharaoh lived in Memphis, and the nomarchs governed for the pharaoh in various parts of the kingdom, communication was important. In order to make communication more efficient, the Egyptians developed a written language called hieroglyphics. **Hieroglyphics** uses pictures of objects, such as animals or plants, to represent words. The Egyptian writers, or scribes, wrote their messages and kept records on a paper-like material that the Egyptians made from the papyrus reed.

About 2200 B.C., the nomarchs began to act more independently and obeyed the king less. Many broke away from Egypt, establishing their own provinces. Some of the nomarchs fought each other over territory. Eventually two separate kingdoms were established.

THE MIDDLE KINGDOM

In 2040 B.C., King Mentuhotep of the 11th dynasty reunited Egypt. He created a centralized monarchy, which launched the period known as the Middle Kingdom. He made Thebes his capital. The nomarchs lost power, and Egypt again became a centralized government. The pharaoh had all of the power in the country.

Things went well for the Egyptians during this time. Egypt became prosperous. New quarries were developed in order to build more temples and other structures. They built dams and a reservoir to manage the flood water. They expanded their kingdom south to Nubia. Egyptians brought gold, ivory, and slaves from Nubia. They also expanded trade during this period. The Egyptians traded with those living in the Middle East, along the Mediterranean, and in other locations. This trade brought peace and wealth to Egypt. Egyptians had time to create works of art, build temples, develop crafts, and practice their religion.

The Middle Kingdom ended when Egypt was conquered by the Hyksos from Canaan. The Hyksos were good soldiers and had superior weapons. The Hyksos had horse-drawn chariots and curved swords called scimitars, which were made of bronze. The wooden weapons of the Egyptians were no match for these modern weapons.

THE NEW KINGDOM

The third period of the Egyptian Civilization is called the New Kingdom, and it lasted from 1600 B.C. until 1100 B.C. This is considered the last great period in Egyptian history. You probably noticed that the Middle Kingdom ended about 1800 B.C. and the New Kingdom began about 1600 B.C. What happened to those 200 years in between? Did Egypt cease to exist? In a way it did. During this time, Egypt was conquered by the Hyksos, who had superior weapons. Eventually, the Egyptians began using these newer weapons as well and were able to win their country back from the Hyksos. Egypt was united once more, and the New Kingdom, sometimes called the Golden Age of Egypt or the Age of Empire, began.

Egyptian armies conquered Syria, Palestine, and the area west of the Euphrates River. Egypt became wealthy. Pharaoh Amenhotep IV forced the people to stop worshipping many gods and told them they should only worship one god, Aten, the sun god. He closed the temples of other gods and had workmen remove the plural word "gods" from buildings and from other structures. He was so devoted to the god Aten, he even changed his own name to Akhenate, which means "spirit of Aten." He created a new capital named Akhetaton, devoted to the god. When Akhenate died, Pharaoh Tutankhamen (Tut) restored the old gods and made Thebes the capital again.



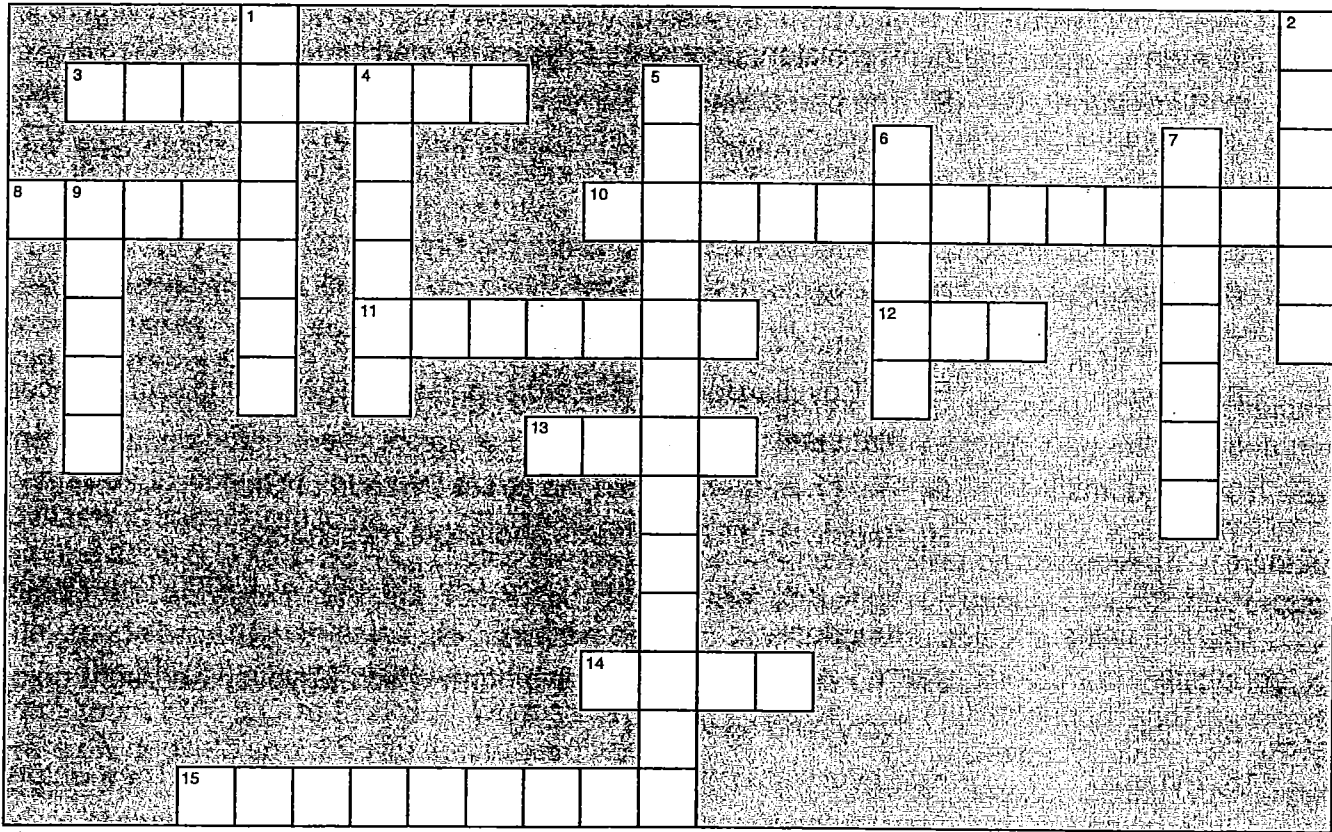
Artifact from King Tut's Tomb

Beginning in 1070 B.C., the Egyptian Empire began to decline. There was a civil war. Egypt also had to defend itself from many different invasions over these years. Egyptians fought the Hittites, the Lybians, the Nubians, and the "sea peoples," invaders from somewhere in the Mediterranean. Over a period of time, the Egyptians were invaded by the Assyrians in 671 B.C., the Persians in 525 B.C., Alexander the Great in 332 B.C., and the Romans in 32 B.C.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Egyptian Civilization Crossword Puzzle

Use the clues below to complete the crossword puzzle about the Egyptian Civilization.



ACROSS

3. Governors assigned to carry out the pharaoh's commands
8. A body preserved by drying
10. The Nile River empties into this sea.
11. The name given to the king or ruler of Egypt
12. The shortened name of the pharaoh who succeeded Amenhotep IV
13. The fine sediment left behind when a flood recedes
14. Location of the pyramid that is considered one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World
15. Curved swords used by the Hyksos

DOWN

1. A kind of a paper was developed from this reed.
2. The metal the Hyksos used to make their weapons
4. Name by which the Pharaoh Khufu is sometimes known
5. The written language of ancient Egypt
6. The triangle area at the mouth of the Nile just before it empties into the ocean
7. Egypt's first capital
9. The part of ancient Egypt located to the south was called the _____ kingdom.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Egyptian Civilization Matching

Match the definition from the column on the right with the corresponding term in the column on the left. Place the letter of the definition on the blank next to the correct term.

- | | |
|---------------------|--|
| ___ 1. Aten | A. The history of ancient Egypt is divided into three ____. |
| ___ 2. Black Land | B. The part of ancient Egypt located in the northern delta where the river spreads out and empties into the Mediterranean Sea was called ____ Egypt. |
| ___ 3. Canal | C. The large river along which the Egyptian Civilization developed |
| ___ 4. Chariots | D. The sea to the east of the Nile River |
| ___ 5. Civil | E. A series of rulers from the same family or line |
| ___ 6. Civilization | F. An Egyptian tomb with a rectangular base and four triangular faces that meet at the top |
| ___ 7. Dynasty | G. The pharaoh buried in the Great Pyramid of Giza |
| ___ 8. Hyksos | H. People who kept records and wrote messages |
| ___ 9. Khufu | I. King Mentuhotep made this city the capital during the Middle Kingdom |
| ___ 10. Kingdoms | J. The country south of Egypt from which Egyptians brought gold, ivory, and slaves |
| ___ 11. Linen | K. Egypt was conquered by these people from Canaan. Their victory over the Egyptians marked the end of the Middle Kingdom. |
| ___ 12. Lower | L. The name of the sun god Pharaoh Amenhotep IV forced his people to worship |
| ___ 13. Mountains | M. The culture developed by a particular region or nation |
| ___ 14. Nile | N. A war between two or more groups in the same country |
| ___ 15. Nubia | O. Horse-drawn vehicles used in war |
| ___ 16. Pyramid | P. The Egyptians called their country the ____ because of the fertile soil. |
| ___ 17. Red Land | Q. The Egyptians called the desert surrounding their country the ____. |
| ___ 18. Red Sea | R. The Nile River is fed by rain and melting snow from the ____ of northeastern Africa. |
| ___ 19. Scribes | S. Rich Egyptians were wrapped in this material when they died. |
| ___ 20. Thebes | T. The Egyptians built one of these between the Nile and the Red Sea in order to improve trade. |

